

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

Letters sent to "The Listener" for publication should be as brief as possible and should deal with topics covered in "The Listener" itself. Correspondents must send their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published. We cannot undertake to give reasons why all or any portion of a letter is rejected.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—I cannot agree with the opinion expressed in your editorial of to-day's date that "Freedom of speech is not precious in itself," and I am sure that few others who pause to consider the implications of your remark will agree either. If we are to continue as a democracy, and I trust that not even war will cause us to abandon what our race has striven for so long to gain, then freedom of speech (subject, of course, to the moral curb of the obscenity laws and the social restraint of the libel laws) should be permitted. If we have not freedom of speech then it is impossible for the individual to find constitutional methods for the spread of his views if such views are unacceptable to the government. Democracy in short is freedom of speech. Under any other system, the minority is driven to direct action. Under democratic government, the rights of minorities are as important as the rights or wishes of the majority, and the most important right which the individual in British countries possesses is the right to express his own opinions and through the power of moral suasion influence the opinion of his fellows.

I submit, therefore, that no one fully seized with the position could say that freedom of speech is of secondary importance. Freedom of speech, like justice and humanity, is a primary liberty, from which the majority of our other liberties derive.

I am, etc.,
AUDAX.

Auckland,
March 1, 1940.

(Nowhere in our article did we say that "freedom of speech is of secondary importance." We said on the contrary that it is "precious," and pointed out that it should be curtailed only when it destroys other freedoms instead of preserving them.—Ed.)

OUR ARTIST

The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—The well executed drawings of your artist are a constant source of delight to me. The Listener would not be the same without such amusing drawings, especially those on the "Things to Come" page. These pictures add a note of humour to your excellent and extremely interesting paper.

Yours, etc.,
M. CALE.

Tauranga,
February 17, 1940.

NEWS IN ENGLISH

To The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—Recently I have received a number of "News in English" sessions that I note are not on your list, viz:—

Ankara, Turkey (two sessions daily), 7.15 a.m. on 31.70 metres, and 12.15 a.m., on 19.74 metres. Also Japan at 12.30 a.m. (approx.), on JZJ and JZI. Another is Delhi, India, at 12.30 a.m., on the 31 metre band.

I have received all of these stations with good strength with the exception of Turkey (12.15 a.m.).

Yours, etc.,
S.M.

Hamilton,
February 26, 1940.

A READER'S THANKS

To The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—I want to tell you how particularly interesting the special Finland Number was to us all. I think most of your readers must appreciate the way in which you keep your subscribers abreast of

all BBC news. It is both an interest and an education to me in International affairs, and, I must confess, in geography also, to read the various Listener articles.

I am sending a copy of the "Finland" Listener to Chicago, where I know the fine article by O. A. Gillespie will also be of great interest to an ex-New Zealander. I have had letters from other readers who are particularly impressed by this issue.

Yours, etc.,
L. A. BROWN.

Christchurch,
February 24, 1940.

LOCAL ARTISTS

To The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—Your correspondent J.E.B. asks for more broadcasting of local singers, and declares that the "freshness" of the untrained frequently surpasses experienced artists. While not wishing to belittle aspiring novices, one is surprised to learn that average efforts could be preferred to the perfection of

Recruiting Meetings

In connection with the Recruiting Drive, the Deputy-Prime Minister, the Hon. Peter Fraser, will speak at the Opera House, Wanganui, at 8 p.m. on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13. The whole of this address will be broadcast by 2YC.

Mr. Fraser's arrangements for THURSDAY, MARCH 14, are:

2 p.m., Grand Theatre, Hawera. (This address will not be broadcast.)

8 p.m., Opera House, New Plymouth. The whole proceedings to be broadcast by 2YB (810 kilocycles).

FRIDAY, MARCH 15:

8 p.m., Whangarei Town Hall. (This address will not be broadcast.)

SATURDAY, MARCH 16:

The speech by the Hon. Peter Fraser in the Bledisloe Hall, Hamilton, will be broadcast from 8.50 p.m. until approx. 9.20. The following stations will take part in the re-broadcast: 1YA, 2YA, 3YA, 4YA, 2YH, 3ZR, and 4YZ.

The Daventry news normally given at 9 o'clock will be recorded and will be presented by all of these stations at the conclusion of Mr. Fraser's address.

the world's best. Indeed, is not the aim of the traditional Conservatoire system to remove the blatancy of that "freshness" which effectively flaws amateur singing?

Many youthful triers on the air would be greatly improved by a course of breathing exercises and tonal study. After hearing an interpretation of opera by Gigli or Korjus, or of Lieder by Richard Tauber, these efforts of parlour-entertainers seem a trifle flat.

While on the subject, I hope the public will grow to realise and appreciate more widely the flute-like genius of Miliza Korjus, who has certainly no feminine rival in this present age. We want much more of her on the air.

Yours, etc.,
PAULA HANGER.

Timaru,
February 27, 1940.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

"Cynia."—We shall recommend the book you mention to our own soldiers when the book we mentioned has been recommended to every soldier in Germany.

Help For The Hard Of Hearing

Great Men Who Were Deaf

SOME famous men who were handicapped by deafness were mentioned by Mrs. G. A. Hurd-Wood in her broadcast from 2YA last Monday (March 11).

Mrs. Hurd-Wood founded the New Zealand League for the Hard of Hearing and has been acting as convener of the Centennial Hearing Week Committee. Her broadcast was made to interest people in helping the deaf and to publicise the movement.

She spoke first of Stanley Baldwin, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, who is very hard of hearing, and has been so for a considerable time. He has worn a hearing aid constantly for years, and has depended a great deal upon his secretary to keep him informed of important conversations.

Another is W. M. Hughes, Attorney-General of the Federal Government of Australia, who though very deaf, has been a Statesman for 46 years.

England's famous portrait painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted himself holding his ear trumpet.

George Meredith was another member of the band of the hard of hearing. William Bramwell Booth was handicapped greatly, but followed in his father's footsteps, and held the position of General until 1928.

Gregg's Shorthand System

One day John Robert Gregg was caught talking to another boy in school. The headmaster banged the boys' heads together. The violence of the blow burst Gregg's ear drum. He suffered from the effects of this all his life, but he achieved fame. Mrs. Hurd-Wood told how he evolved a system of shorthand which was published in Liverpool, when he was about nineteen years of age. Gregg is now living in America.

Acquired deafness is, to a great extent, preventable, the League says. Mrs. Hurd-Wood said that when an adult first noticed that his hearing was failing he should see a specialist. The trouble might be caused from wax in the ears; from infection caused through diseased tonsils, diseased teeth, or other causes which can be remedied.

Trouble Can Now Be Checked

Science had advanced rapidly during the last decade. Scientific apparatus now used for testing the hearing loss enabled the specialist to detect even a very small loss. If prompt and proper treatment were followed, in many cases the trouble could be checked, if not removed.

All leagues for the hard of hearing emphasise the necessity for combining the senses of sight and hearing.

It is a recognised fact that if one sense is impaired, others can be trained to do extra duty. Powers of observation and intuition can be sharpened.

A hard of hearing person and particularly a parent should take advantage of all the modern aids in understanding conversations.

Suggestions for Hearing Aids

Mrs. Hurd-Wood made these suggestions for hearing aids:

Combine lip-reading with the use of a hearing aid—use amplified telephones, which are more powerful than ordinary 'phones, and buzzers to take the place of bells. These and eye-ball indicators overcome the difficulty of knowing when there is someone trying to call on the phone.

Many people consider that they cannot hear when actually they have forgotten how to listen. Though the re-educating of ears is a special study, yet there have been many cases where people have re-educated their own ears by regular use of the radio. Hard of hearing people forget how to listen, because they have stopped trying.

Always have the light on your own face when talking to a lip-reader. Speak naturally, and at a moderate rate of speed. Do not exaggerate the movements or speak in isolated words. People lip-read as we read printed matter—in phrases.